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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort to reinforce the general education competencies of students in its Associate in Applied Science degree programs, Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) conducted two needs assessment surveys to develop a list of critical life skills for integration into existing curricula. Each of the identified skills can be developed in 2 years, has measurable outcomes, and is necessary for success in occupational and personal life. A group of general education faculty analyzed the 23 life skills that emerged from the surveys and developed a one-page "clarification" for each skill. The clarifications defined the competency, described the curricular process for developing the skill, and listed the necessary knowledge and attitudes accompanying the skill. Once the skills were identified, special faculty committees began developing curricular strategies for teaching the skills in existing general education courses and for supporting and reinforcing the skills in occupational courses. Following an introduction describing the project's background and methodology, the 23 one-page clarifications are presented for the following critical life skills: career exploration; career selection; career securing; standard written English; oral communication; interpersonal/small group communication; public speaking; reading; information seeking; learning strategies; mathematics; conflict resolution; problem solving; family and social relations; time management; professional and personal ethics; teamwork; valuing diversity; stress management; critical thinking; self-concept; coping with change; and science and technology. (JMC)

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WAUKESHA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

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WAUKESHA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT EFFORT

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

As the new skills of workers at all levels and the skills necessary for the citizens participating in a democracy become more difficult to separate, it became obvious to many at Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) that it was imperative to integrate those new skills into the competencies of WCTC Associate of Applied Science degree programs.

While there has been general acceptance of the "applied academics" concept at WCTC for general educational courses, it was also becoming evident that there were many general education competencies that should be reinforced in occupational courses. In addition, new competencies that had long been referred to, but seldom specifically taught; i.e., critical thinking, decision making, leadership and teamwork, coupled with curriculum-wide concepts; i.e., writing across the curriculum and internationalizing the curriculum had to be addressed.

Under the premise that additional courses could not be added to the curriculum, and the premise that specific competencies could be introduced in one course and expanded and reinforced in other courses, the career life skills development process was begun.

In 1985, Waukesha County Technical College began to implement the Critical Life Skills portion of the WCTC Student Development Model.

DEFINITION

"Student development" as it was defined at WCTC, is a concept which recognizes the importance of continually developing the intellectual, social, physical and career life skills of individual students. The concept includes providing a supportive environment so that students can master increasingly complex developmental tasks, achieve self direction, recognize the importance of cooperative effort and learn how to learn. Student Development addresses the needs of students beyond the college experience and enables them to function as successful human beings in their occupational and personal lives.

PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

Over a two-year period, the Critical Life Skills Steering Committee completed two needs assessment surveys and used the results to develop a list of "life skills" that WCTC

associate degree students would develop along with the occupational skills emphasized in their formal programs. Volunteer committee members obtained survey instruments and administered the surveys to students, staff, board, advisory committees, etc. The original list of critical life skills was quite extensive, and only those that met the following criteria were included in the final list:

1. the skill can be developed in two years
2. the skill has measurable outcomes
3. the skill is necessary for success in occupational and personal life

Under the leadership of the Dean of Student Development Division and the Manager of Student Development, focus groups consisting of 12 staff members each, were organized to develop the survey instrument, to collect and analyze the survey data, to condense the information, and to succinctly form a statement of proposed knowledge that was thought to be critical to the occupational and personal success of associate degree graduates at WCTC.

The 23 life skills that finally emerged from this process were then analyzed by a group of general education faculty. Attached is a list of the Life Skills. Approximately 25 staff members participated in small focus teams assisted by the WCTC Curriculum Specialist. Each analysis resulted in a one-page clarification of a competency. Each clarification page lists the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve competency in the skill and indicates how and where in the general education curriculum the life skill is taught. Each of these skills is a transferable skill that can be addressed systematically and consistently across the WCTC curricular and co-curricular areas, and each is critical to the students' occupational and personal success regardless of occupational area. The one-page clarification for each of the skills is available upon request.

IMPLEMENTATION

While the competencies were being integrated into general education courses, work began in the occupational divisions to determine where the competencies exist and can be supported. When completed, this approach will allow the basics of each competency to be taught in general education and reinforced and applied throughout the appropriate occupational areas. Student Services is also involved in the development of these competencies through various co-curricular offerings and services.

At this stage in the process of implementation of the Life Skills across the curriculum, the following focus groups are functioning:

Steering Committee - This committee consists of 13 staff members with representation across instructional disciplines and has the responsibility to coordinate the effort and offer guidance and advice.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Committee (charged with implementing Life Skills 12 and 20) - This focus group consists of eleven staff members representing six occupational programs across the district. This group is co-chaired by a Communication Skills instructor and the manager of the Communication Skills/Social Sciences Department. The charge of the Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Committee is to infuse critical thinking and problem solving into appropriate courses of the district, beginning with six associate degree programs. During the 1989-90 school year, the committee was involved in professional development activities to prepare themselves for developing curriculum and methodologies useful to completing the charge of the committee and development of a plan for implementation. During the 1990-91 school year, the focus is on development of curriculum in critical thinking and problem solving in the six program areas and providing staff development opportunities for other staff. A course on critical thinking is being coordinated through the University of Wisconsin as part of this effort.

Writing Across the Curriculum Committee (charged with implementation of Life Skills 4 and 5) - During the 1989-90 school year, an instructor in the Academic Support Department conducted preliminary research and developed a plan for the implementation. During the spring of 1991, 13 staff members representing appropriate instructional areas, are working as a focus group to implement the concentrated teaching of learning of communication skills across the curriculum.

The Valuing Diversity/Internationalizing the Curriculum Committee (charged with implementing Life Skill 17) - This is a focus group of seven staff members across the district which has been meeting since the summer of 1990 to address the issues stated in this life skill.

The Reading and Learning Strategies Committee (charged with implementing Life Skills 7 and 9) - One staff member from the Academic Support Department did initial research for these life skills in the fall of 1990. During the spring of 1991 another staff member joined the initial member to develop a plan and identify other instructors who can work on implementation in the occupational programs that have been selected initially.

The competencies of Team Building and Conflict Resolution (11 and 16) and the Family and Social Relations (13) each have had an instructional staff member research and collect data on instruction in these content areas. Plans are being developed for proceeding with instructional development in six pilot programs for these life skills.

Charge of Focus Groups

Each Life Skill Implementation Group has the following as its charge:

a. Determine location of competency already taught in current curriculum

b. Determine appropriate curriculum projects needed to update or enhance curriculum

c. Work with General Education and Occupational faculty to coordinate infusion fo competencies

d. Recommend selected training of faculty involved in integration of life skills across the curriculum

Under the guidance of the focus groups, volunteer faculty in various occupational programs are developing specific competencies that reinforce career life skills. Progress is occurring in some programs more rapidly than others. For example, "Critical Thinking" has been integrated into the Associate Degree Nursing program and the Associate Degree Automotive Technology program. In addition, many individual courses, such as Basic Circuitry, Ethics and Law for Health, Marketing Information Management, Principles of Supervision, Introduction to Psychology, and Introduction to Sociology have integrated "Critical Thinking" into the curriculum. A course entitled "Critical and Creative" Thinking is also currently being developed. A graduate level course from the UW system is currently being offered at WCTC for WCTC faculty.

We are very pleased with the progress accomplished by the WCTC faculty, management, and Board in the development and implementation of the WCTC Student Development Model, and the Critical Life Skills component.

Attachment

m/a.wp/Student.Dev.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

WAUKESHA COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE
800 MAIN STREET · PEWAUKEE, WI 53072

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

1. CAREER EXPLORATION: The student will be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate abilities, values, personality type, interests, and needs as they relate to career exploration and change.

2. CAREER SELECTION: The student will be able to make appropriate career choices and set goals to achieve that end.

3. CAREER SECURING: The student will be able to demonstrate job search and interview skills.

4. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of the basic mechanics, e.g., spelling, punctuation, grammar, of standard written English.

5. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to use written communication appropriate to the situation in order to express ideas, needs, and concerns clearly, concisely, and accurately.

6. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to communicate in interpersonal or small group settings.

7. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to communicate in a public setting.

8. READING: The student will be able to read critically and analytically.

9. INFORMATION SEEKING: The student will be able to identify and fulfill information needs.

10. LEARNING STRATEGIES: The student will be able to use effective study skills in order to master course content.

11. MATHEMATICS: The student will be able to demonstrate numerical and logical reasoning and apply mathematical concepts in a variety of real life settings.

12. CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The student will be able to apply effective techniques to resolve interpersonal conflict.

13. PROBLEM SOLVING: The student will be able to demonstrate effective problem-solving skills.

14. FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS: The student will be able to apply effective communication techniques and behavioral self-management in order to develop positive relationships with family members, co-workers, friends and others.

15. TIME MANAGEMENT: The student will be able to organize activities to accomplish desired tasks in the time available.

16. PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ETHICS: The student will be able to describe a collection of generally accepted ethical standards for "right conduct" in both personal and professional areas.

17. TEAMWORK: The student will be able to work effectively and cooperatively in a group setting.

18. VALUING DIVERSITY: The student will be able to avoid misunderstandings based on differences. The student will develop the ability to interact in a positive way with people who are different from him/her.

19. STRESS MANAGEMENT: The student will be able to manage stress in appropriate ways.

20. CRITICAL THINKING: The student will be able to apply the techniques of analytical thinking and effective decision-making skills.

21. SELF-CONCEPT: The student will be able to evaluate his/her self-concept in regards to self-esteem, values/attitudes, interests, goals and strengths/weaknesses.

22. COPING WITH CHANGE: The student will be able to understand the inevitability of change. The student will recognize that all change implies transition. The student will have the skills to recognize, cope with, and manage transition.

23. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The student will be able to use the principles of science and understand their effect on technology and change.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS
for
OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

LEARNING
Information Seeking
Learning Strategies

COMMUNICATING
Interpersonal or Small Group
Public Speaking
Basic English Grammar
Writing
Reading

THINKING
Problem Solving
Critical Thinking
Mathematics
Science and Technology

PERSONAL/CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Career Exploration
Career Selection
Career Securing
Family and Social Relations
Time Management
Professional and Personal Ethics
Stress Management
Self-Concept

GROUP/ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Conflict Resolution
Teamwork
Valuing Diversity
Coping with Change

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to use written communication appropriate to the situation in order to express ideas, needs, and concerns clearly, concisely, and accurately.

Performance Standard: Written communications are produced as final copies that show an awareness of audience, purpose, and approaches to subject. The writing is unified, coherent, complete, and well organized. These communications demonstrate a knowledge of the basic mechanics of standard written English.

Process:

1. Determine subject and appropriate focus.
2. Determine purpose of communication.
3. Analyze audience.
4. Gather and organize data and ideas.
5. Choose appropriate format for a written communication.
6. Pre-write communication.
7. Write draft.
8. Revise communication.
9. Produce final, proofread copy of written communication.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Apply critical thinking skills to writing situations.
- Identify characteristics of various audiences.
- Use a variety of pre-writing and information gathering techniques, e.g., brainstorming, mapping, and free-writing.
- Conduct research on a topic.
- Select and use various formats for written communication that are appropriate to given situations.
- Construct clear, logical paragraphs.
- Write sentences that reflect intention and observe correct usage standards.
- Revise written materials with attention to content, organization, sentence variety, and style.
- Write logically, supplying adequate evidence and sound conclusions.
- Produce a final copy of communication using a typewriter or word processor, if possible.

Attitudes:

- Recognize that hard work is involved in writing.
- Approach topic with a fresh point of view.
- Be willing to solicit and incorporate feedback from other writers.
- Assume the responsibility for finding and correcting errors.
- Recognize the influence that appearance of a communication has on the reader in regard to the quality of work.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

SELF-CONCEPT: The student will be able to evaluate his/her self-concept in regards to self-esteem, values/attitudes, interests, goals and strengths/weaknesses.

Performance Standard: These questions about self-concept are answered:

- How would you describe yourself?
- What do you like about yourself?
- Which aspects would you like to change and how might this change your self-concept?

Process:

1. Define self, "Who am I?"
2. Affirm, modify, or reject self-perception.
3. Understand origins of self-concept.
4. Appreciate and accept self.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Define self-concept/self-esteem.
- Be aware of the personal characteristics which make up self-concept.
- Identify the core of self.
- Understand how we acquire ideas and feelings which make up our self-concept.
- Use experience and feedback to expand ideas of self.
- Seek out those who accept and affirm what we like about ourselves.
- Examine how self-concept changes.
- Continue to grow in understanding of one's self.
- Apply the principles of behavior management to make changes.

Attitudes:

- Recognize the impact of self-esteem on one's self-concept and one's acceptance of others.
- Recognize that a limited self-concept can be changed, even in adulthood.
- Recognize that everyone experiences limited self-concept at one time or another (as when change threatens one's sense of being important or when expectations are not realized).
- Recognize that self-concept influences our experiences so that we tend to perceive, judge, and act in ways that are consistent with our self-image.
- Because one's current self-concept may not be accurate, be willing to accept input (in the forms of new experiences and feedback) that might vary from one's current self-concept.
- Be open and trusting of our experiences.

- Be more accepting of others.
- Affirm one's self as a process of becoming, i.e., self-actualization is a direction rather than a destination.
- Recognize that self-concept influences our self-esteem and how we may relate to others.
- Recognize that one (of many) ingredient for a "healthy"/good relationship is a positive/"healthy" self-image.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

TEAMWORK: The student will be able to work effectively and cooperatively in a group setting.

Performance Standard: A team is organized and group participants identify their roles and responsibilities. The group defines its task and begins its work. Participants contribute to the group effort. The group assesses its progress.

Process:

1. Determine desired style of leadership.
2. Identify group tasks.
3. Match members to group tasks.
4. Establish group's operating procedure.
5. Set time frame to accomplish tasks.
6. Encourage sharing of information, ideas, and opinions.
7. Accomplish task.
8. Evaluate outcome.
9. Come to closure.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Conduct an effective, efficient meeting.
- Record the meeting.
- Assume responsibilities.
- Manage time.
- Assess team wellness.
- Periodically evaluate process being used.
- Resolve conflict within the group.
- Negotiate with others on the team.
- Move toward consensus for group decisions.
- Communicate effectively within a group.
- Recognize strategies for change.
- Influence others on the team.
- Identify team types (learning, study, decision making).
- Be familiar with steps of problem solving.
- Recognize characteristics of effective group participants.
- Recognize characteristics of effective group leaders.

Attitudes:

- Support others' efforts.
- Be sensitive to others' feelings.
- Be willing to self disclose.

- Be receptive to feedback: criticism and assistance.
- Tolerate differences.
- Have pride in participation and leadership.
- Be willing to assess own role.
- Maintain a sense of humor.
- Appreciate the efforts of others.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

PROBLEM SOLVING: The student will be able to demonstrate effective problem-solving skills.

Performance Standard: The student resolves a stated problem through the use of a systematic problem solving process.

Process:

1. Define the problem in terms of needs.
2. Collect and analyze data.
3. Generate possible alternatives.
4. Develop a workable plan.
5. Implement the plan.
6. Evaluate the plan.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Identify the problem.
- Acknowledge feelings surrounding problem.
- Determine ownership of the problem.
- Analyze cause and effect.
- Collect data through probing questions and research.
- Elaborate and evaluate data.
- Use techniques such as brainstorming to generate alternatives.
- Evaluate alternatives.
- Select solution.
- Monitor progress.
- Evaluate outcome.
- Make adjustment or improvements to the solution.
- Redefine the problem, if necessary.

If done in the context of a group, additional knowledge and skills include:

- Understand the dynamics of group behavior including participation of all.
- Understand the need to reach consensus in a group for a group problem.

Attitudes:

- Recognize the symptoms are not the problem.
- Prevent jumping to quick solutions.
- Accept all ideas during brainstorming.
- Seek clarity and realism in plans and timetables.
- Recognize that outside help may sometimes be necessary.
- Realize that problem solving can involve risk.

If done in the context of a group, additional attitudes include:

- Trust of others.
- Respect for the contributions of others.
- Empathy with group members.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

CAREER EXPLORATION: The student will be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate abilities, values, personality type, interests, and needs as they relate to career exploration and change.

Performance Standard: Interests, skills, abilities, values, personality preferences, and needs are identified and can be conveyed to another person, and are related to career and job clusters.

Process:

1. Identify own marketable skills and abilities.
2. Identify own interests.
3. Assess own personality preferences.
4. Identify own values.
5. Determine financial and personal needs from a job.
6. Analyze and evaluate personal information to identify possible job clusters.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Identify your skills and abilities.
- Identify skills you most enjoy using.
- Identify personality preferences that do not change.
- Identify careers that match your skills and abilities.
- Prioritize life and work values.
- Distinguish between needs and wants.

Attitudes:

- Know what kind of risk taker you are.
- Motivate self.
- Recognize career and life planning as an ongoing, continual process.
- Consider and identify the futurity of present decisions.
- Take control of your career planning.
- Take time for sufficient gathering of information from diverse resources.
- Take time to organize and relate information to occupations.
- Determine the amount of time available for career exploration.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

CAREER SELECTION: The student will be able to make appropriate career choices and set goals to achieve that end.

Performance Standard: Career choices are made and can be conveyed to another person. Career goals are set and a plan of action to achieve goals is developed. Alternative options are recognized.

Process:

1. Research job clusters to determine possible careers.
2. Determine career choices and alternatives using personal information and career research.
3. Set long-range and short-range goals.
4. Develop a plan of action to achieve goals.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Use appropriate resources for career research.
- Utilize all steps of decision-making process.
- Analyze and evaluate personal information.
- Determine your time lines.

Attitudes:

- Plan a career path for a changing world.
- Believe that you can achieve your goal.
- Identify resources that will empower you to achieve your goal.
- Follow through with your plan of action.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

CAREER SECURING: The student will be able to demonstrate job search and interview skills.

Performance Standard: A job search is conducted including the production of a resume and a plan for locating suitable jobs and securing an interview. A mock interview is conducted. A thank you letter is written as follow-up to a job interview. A job application is completed.

Process:

1. Identify job possibilities.
2. Write a resume.
3. Complete an application for a job.
4. Participate in an effective interview.
5. Accept or reject a job offer.
6. Develop a record keeping system for job search.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Determine perspective employers needs.
- Identify various job search methods.
- Determine how to get in to see the boss.
- Write legibly or type.
- Communicate on the telephone.
- Produce an effective resume.
- Write letters.
- Communicate own strengths to perspective employers.
- Participate in a job interview.
- Identify the person who can hire you.

Attitudes:

- Keep at it.
- Develop a job search network.
- Follow through on all job leads.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of the basic mechanics, e.g., spelling, punctuation, grammar, of standard written English.

Performance Standard: A final copy of a short paper is written which demonstrates sentences that observe correct usage standards.

Process:

1. Identify mechanical or syntactical errors in own writing.
2. Use appropriate resources to determine acceptable usage.
3. Correct errors.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Proofread paper for errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage. This skill may include the ability to use the following:
  a. rules of grammar,
  b. spelling guides, or dictionaries, or spell-check on word processor,
  c. rules of punctuation,
  d. rules of abbreviation including punctuation and spacing,
  e. rules of capitalization,
  f. basic rules of plurals and possessives, and
  g. rules of usage for compound words and word division.
- Apply rules of sentence and paragraph structure.
- Produce a final copy of communication using a typewriter or word processor, if possible.

Attitudes:

- Recognize that the appearance of a written communication influences the reader regarding the quality of the work.
- Assume responsibility for finding and correcting errors.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to communicate in interpersonal or small group settings.

Performance Standard: Listen and respond appropriately in an interpersonal setting; express perceptions, feelings, wants, needs, intentions, and requests assertively; use problem-solving strategies to resolve interpersonal conflicts within a simulation of interpersonal or small group setting.

Process:

1. Identify common bad listening habits.
2. Employ good listening habits.
3. Use response styles appropriately.
4. Interpret nonverbal cues accurately.
5. Demonstrate assertive communication techniques.
6. Apply problem-solving strategies in interpersonal situations.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Explain general principles of communication theory.
- Distinguish hearing from listening.
- Evaluate personal listening habits.
- Recognize the need for personal listening improvement.
- Explain the role of feedback in interpersonal communication.
- Assess personal feedback style.
- Recognize a nonverbal cue.
- Recognize one's own nonverbal cues.
- Distinguish nonassertive, assertive, and aggressive behaviors.
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of non-assertive, assertive, and aggressive behaviors.
- Assess personal problem-solving style.
- Use basic problem-solving techniques.

Attitudes:

- Respect other's views.
- Respect one's own views.
- Be open to criticism.
- Be willing to be critical of one's own ideas, as well as the ideas of others.
- Be willing to take risks.
- Be responsive to change.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The student will be able to communicate in a public setting.

Performance Standard: A speech is delivered in a public setting. The presentation is logical, purposeful, organized, and well supported. The speaker makes effective use of voice and body in delivering the presentation.

Process:

1. Select and narrow subject.
2. Determine the purpose.
3. Analyze audience.
4. Gather supporting material.
5. Prepare an outline.
6. Practice delivery.
7. Deliver the speech.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Explain general principles of communication theory.
- Apply critical thinking skills to speaking situations.
- Identify characteristics of various audiences.
- Use a variety of prewriting and information gathering techniques, e.g., brainstorming, listing, and freewriting.
- Conduct research on a topic.
- Select and use various formats for spoken communication that are appropriate to given situations.
- Develop introductions and conclusions for speeches.
- Choose materials to support assertions for informative and persuasive speeches, e.g., examples, explanations, and illustrations.
- Construct a clear, logical outline indicating the plan for the speech.
- Develop and integrate effective visual aids.
- Present emotional, ethical, and logical appeals for persuasive purposes.

Attitudes:

- Have the desire to be influential with an audience.
- Be willing to critically evaluate own speeches.
- Be open to working with groups to organize and/or present speech.
- Be sensitive to audience needs.
- Be willing to experiment with a variety of topics and techniques.
- Be open to conflicting points of view.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

READING: The student will be able to read critically and analytically.

Performance Standard: Reading material is evaluated for truth, accuracy, and value of what is read.

Process:

1. Interpret factual written material.
2. Apply information to real life situations.
3. Analyze information to evaluate truth and accuracy.
4. Synthesize information.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

Literal

- Comprehend word meanings, using context, structural analysis, and dictionary.
- Read to locate significant facts and details.
- Organize information sequentially.

Interpretive

- Find main or central idea of paragraph/article/essay/story.
- Draw inferences/conclusions/generalizations.
- Summarize or paraphrase content of article.
- Recognize and solve analogies.
- Identify various organizational patterns such as time order, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and listing.

Evaluation (Critical Reading)

- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Detect propaganda and persuasion techniques.
- Ascertain author's intent/purpose/bias.
- Detect examples of faulty thinking.
- Judge the worth and value of material read.

Application

- Use divergent thinking to solve problems.
- Generate new or alternate solutions to problems or situations.

Attitudes:

- Recognize creative reading as valuable.
- Value divergent thinking, i.e., many different ways of looking at things.
- Be intelligent risk-takers or make educated guesses.
- Encourage problem-solving in many different ways.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

INFORMATION SEEKING: The student will be able to identify and fulfill information needs.

Performance Standard: A need for information is identified. Sufficient and reliable information is located, analyzed for reliability, and reported.

Process:

1. Identify need for information.
2. Identify kind of information needed.
3. Identify possible sources of information.
4. Locate information.
5. Determine whether information is reliable.
6. Determine whether more information is needed.
7. Report information sources.
8. Identify differing viewpoints and perspectives.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Define a problem.
- Search bibliographies.
- Use dictionaries, encyclopedias, and monographs.
- Use the card catalog, indexes, abstracts, microfiche, and directories found in the library.
- Use computer search services.
- Be aware of interlibrary loan services.
- Use community agencies as a source of information.
- Use WCTC internal resources, e.g., registrar's office, financial aid office, and placement office.
- Use daily newspapers, magazines, and television for information.
- Read and listen critically and analytically.
- Analyze information for reliability
- Relay information in oral and written forms.
- Determine when information needs are specific and thorough or when needs are general or an overview of the subject is needed.

Attitudes:

- Recognize the value of making decisions based on information.
- Apply knowledge-seeking skills to both personal and occupational aspects of life.
- Make decisions with adequate information and analysis.
- Value the library as a source of additional resources and information to stay current and solve problems in technical field.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

LEARNING STRATEGIES: The student will be able to use effective study skills in order to master course content.

Performance Standard: An all-encompassing study plan is developed to facilitate mastery of course content.

Process:

1. Manage personal and study time.
2. Determine the best place to study.
3. Develop effective and efficient study techniques.
4. Apply study techniques to course content.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Establish priorities.
- Develop a time schedule and implement it.
- Select a study site free of distractions in order to promote concentration.
- Know and use proper listening methods for classroom lectures and discussions.
- Employ an effective note-taking procedure such as the Cornell note-taking method.
- Utilize a recognized textbook reading and study technique, i.e., SQ3R, OK4R.
- Apply appropriate memory strategies to aid in learning and recall.
- Develop and follow a plan for the preparation for and the taking of tests.
- Employ test taking strategies to demonstrate mastery of course content.
- Determine purpose for reading and use appropriate reading style, i.e., plan, skim, scan, and study.
- Know and be able to use reference skills including map, chart, graph reading as well as dictionary, encyclopedia, thesaurus, and computer search.

Attitudes:

- Strive to become an independent learner.
- Accept responsibility to help to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, i.e., enthusiasm, interest.
- Recognize that overlearning helps to retain information over a long period of time.
- Attain positive attitudes toward learning tasks.
- Value learning for learning's sake.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

MATHEMATICS: The student will be able to demonstrate numerical and logical reasoning and apply mathematical concepts in a variety of real life settings.*

Performance Standard: A problem is read, interpreted, and mathematical concepts are applied to reach a solution. The solution is analyzed, reworked if needed, and applied to problem.

Process:

1. Identify a problem.
2. Identify known and unknown quantities.
3. Identify mathematical relationships.
4. Apply mathematical concepts to arrive at a solution.
5. Analyze solution with respect to original problem.
6. Apply the solution to original problem.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Set up and solve problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, fractions and decimals.
- Set up and solve ratio, proportion, and percent problems.
- Interpret charts, graphs, and tables.
- Construct graphs, charts, and tables from given data.
- Use basic mathematical tools as needed.
- Use various measuring systems.
- Solve consumer problems.
- Use formulas and evaluate the results.
- Convert verbal statements to mathematical expressions.
- Understand "everyday" statistical concepts.

Attitudes:

- Approach mathematics with ease.
- Value mathematical ability that allows one to participate fully as worker and citizen in contemporary society.
- Recognize that workers will need to use increasingly large and complex bodies of information.
- Perceive the relevance and value of mathematics to everyday life.
- Recognize the relationship of mathematics to higher order thinking skills.
- Recognize mathematics as a way of thinking, communicating, and resolving problems.

*NOTE: Specific Associate Degree programs may require additional mathematical knowledge.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: The student will be able to apply effective techniques to resolve interpersonal conflict.

Performance Standard: Effective techniques of conflict resolution will be demonstrated. (ASSUMPTION: The measure of effectiveness is the maximization of benefits for all parties.)

Process:

1. Identify the nature of the conflict.
2. Explain the underlying dynamics of the conflict.
3. Critically assess applicability of various techniques to resolve a conflict.
4. Use a conflict resolution method to deal with the opposing interests of choices.
5. Evaluate the method used. (Did the resolution benefit all parties? Was it a win/win situation?)

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Become aware of the conflict.
- Personal awareness.
- Listening skills.
- Clearly express one's position.
- Use methods available to solve conflicts (e.g., bargaining, negotiating, compromise, etc.) and be aware of the potential results of using each method.
- Recognize that you can control only your side of the conflict.
- Recognize that some conflict can only be handled by professionals.
- Control expression of emotions.
- Take other person's perceptions, needs and values into consideration.

Attitudes:

- Value and respect differences.
- Recognize that conflicts can have positive outcomes.
- Recognize the need to respect the other person.
- Recognize the benefit that emotional control can have in the resolution of conflict.
- Demonstrate sensitivity for other's needs.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONS: The student will be able to apply effective communication techniques and behavioral self-management in order to develop positive relationships with family members, co-workers, friends and others.

Performance Standard: A mutually satisfying relationship is described, including factors that contribute to its effectiveness, and a plan is developed to implement some of these factors into his/her own personal relationships.

Process:

1. Analyze the ways that relationships are established, built, evaluated and maintained.
2. Explain the way in which roles and expectations influence relationships.
3. Given one's individual motives and emotions, explain how they influence a relationship.
4. Describe the function of effective communication techniques throughout the development of a relationship.
5. Demonstrate how to evaluate a relationship.
6. Identify which behaviors would improve one's personal relationships and how one would use behavior principles, such as positive reinforcement, to effect change.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Use the process of effective communication (both verbal and non-verbal).
- Recognize the power of a positive first impression.
- Explain the implications of gender roles.
- Explain sexual attitudes and behaviors in relationships.
- Be aware of the impact of a relationship on an individual.
- Recognize what commitment involves.
- Recognize what keeps committed relationships going. (Committed relationships can be volunteer work, business relationships, friendships, etc.)
- Recognize the stages of marriage as a special relationship.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with others.

Attitudes:

- Develop a sense of personal responsibility.
- Exhibit a more accepting attitude towards others.
- Recognize that openness is a pre-requisite to a committed relationship.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

TIME MANAGEMENT: The student will be able to organize activities to accomplish desired tasks in the time available.

Performance Standard: One's own time management strategies are analyzed, areas for improvement are identified and an action plan is formulated to implement improvements.

Process:

1. Discuss the characteristics of effective time management.
2. Identify behaviors that are ineffective.
3. Analyze the way that one uses time now.
4. Identify areas for improvement.
5. Develop a multi-step action plan that would improve one's management of time.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Use effective time management strategies which include, but are not limited to: having clear and specific goals, setting deadlines, setting priorities and minimizing time wasters.
- Recognize misconceptions of time management, i.e., the busiest people get the most done; working harder will get rid of backlog, etc.
- Identify and/or establish goals.
- Develop goals that are measurable, realistic and attainable within the given time frame.
- Develop everyday objectives that are part of both short-term and long-term goals.
- Be able to personalize goals that are set by others.
- Recognize that sometimes one must say "NO" to new or additional responsibilities.
- Recognize that one's personality type may affect one's choice of methods in managing time.
- Recognize that the U.S. concept of time management is not a cultural universal.

Attitudes:

- Recognize that all goals are not personally set and one needs to take ownership, modify or reject these goals.
- Realize that the way one views time is the way one uses it.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL ETHICS: The student will be able to describe a collection of generally accepted ethical standards for "right conduct" in both personal and professional areas.

Performance Standard: Personal and professional "right conduct," is described, based on universal principles, i.e., respect for the dignity of individuals and the welfare of the community. Ethical reasoning is demonstrated in simulated or real life situations.

Process:

1. Define and show the relationship between the words: ethics, morals, morality and moral reasoning.
2. Demonstrate the ability to use the terms accurately through case analysis.
3. Draw inferences and conclusions concerning ethics and decision making from the illustrations.
4. Develop and identify personal and professional standards.
5. Apply professional and personal ethical standards in case studies, simulated applications or real life situations.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Describe ethics as the study of human reasoning as applied to solving the problem of "What is the right thing to do?"
- Explain the meaning of the words: ethics, morals, morality and moral reasoning.
- Explain how ethical standards are determined.
- Explain values and how they are derived.
- Explain a core of values by which a person functions and the hierarchy of importance that exists.
- Clarify one's own core values.
- Describe both costs and benefits of actions for both the individual and society.
- Describe the effect one's personal and/or business actions have on others.
- Identify how psychological needs and defenses could stop one from making an ethical decision.
- Explain how organizations do not make ethical decisions, but individuals within the organization do.
- Identify obstacles to incorporating ethics into work related decisions.
- Recognize that individuals should bear responsibility for their actions.

Attitudes:

- Value honesty, integrity and responsibility.
- Value the desire for truth and/or "the right action."

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

VALUING DIVERSITY: The student will be able to avoid misunderstandings based on differences. The student will develop the ability to interact in a positive way with people who are different from him/her.

Performance Standard: The negative function on self and/or on society of intolerance of people who are different from one's self, is demonstrated in a simulated situation.

Process:

1. Recognize that everyone is divergent from a "norm."
2. Explain the concepts of cultural universality and cultural diversity.
3. Relate examples of how intolerance is often based on the perception of incompatible values.
4. Demonstrate how the valuing system is established.
5. Explain how any organized value system affects behavior.
6. Judge whether the effect on self and/or on society has been beneficial.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Have knowledge of implied norms.
- Recognize how the past has formed and shaped one's present values and biases.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Recognize how the strength of one's own basic needs influences one's ability to deal with differences.
- Recognize the power of propaganda, brainwashing and stereotyping.
- Recognize the fact that prejudicial behavior is goal directed behavior.
- Define ethnocentrism and cultural relativism.
- Recognize discrimination, its causes and effects such as barriers to full participation in society.
- Recognize that uncomfortableness occurs when trying to increase cultural awareness.
- Use knowledge of geography, history, religion, politics, customs, economics, language, etc., where appropriate.

Attitudes:

- Demonstrate sensitivity to others.
- Respect the diversity in people, in belief systems.
- Demonstrate open-mindedness to information that may be contradictory to one's perceptions.
- Demonstrate tolerance for differences.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

STRESS MANAGEMENT: The student will be able to manage stress in appropriate ways.

Performance Standard: Personal sources of stress are identified, personal stress reactions are identified, and a plan for appropriate stress management is developed.

Process:

1. Identify sources of stress.
2. Identify personal stress reactions.
3. Identify various methods to reduce (manage) stress.
4. Develop an individual plan for managing stress.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Clarify the concept of stress.
- Identify common stressors.
- Distinguish between stressors and stress.
- Understand interaction of common stressors and personal stress reactions.
- Describe typical stress reactions.
- Understand personal stress reactions.
- Identify appropriate and inappropriate coping devices.
- Understand how relaxation techniques, a positive life style and life management skills can mitigate stress.
- Understand that stress can have both positive and negative effects.
- Apply the principles of behavior management to reduce the effects of stress.

Attitudes:

- Recognize that stress, managed properly, may contribute to personal growth.
- Recognize that help from others is often beneficial.
- Realize that some sources of stress are self-inflicted.
- Recognize that some personal expectations may be unrealistic and/or a source of personal stress.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

CRITICAL THINKING: The student will be able to apply the techniques of analytical thinking and effective decision-making skills.

Performance Standard: Thinking skills are used to analyze situations. Empathy is expressed for other viewpoints. Appropriate decisions are made and/or actions taken.

Process:

1. Precisely identify the subject under discussion.
2. Increase the knowledge in a specific subject area: listening, reading, interviewing, reviewing own background and experiences.
3. Employ strategies used by reasoners: deduction, induction, evidence, suggestions, motivational appeals.
4. Learn to identify commonly used fallacies and propaganda techniques.
5. Engage in an immediate review/appraisal of evidence.
6. Provide sufficient time for delayed analysis of evidence (thinking time).
7. Identify and assess any changes in one's beliefs and attitudes.
8. Apply critical thinking information to work toward the goal or decision at hand.
9. Implement decisions that result from critical thinking.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Focus on particular subject area.
- Use resources to enhance knowledge and understanding of a subject.
- Draw logical conclusions from evidence.
- Distinguish objective and subjective perceptions.
- Distinguish facts, inferences, and judgments.
- Construct and evaluate arguments.
- Support viewpoints/arguments with reason and evidence.
- Present ideas for critical evaluation.
- Assess feedback from others.

Attitudes:

- Be receptive to new ideas.
- Display empathy to others' viewpoints.
- Be willing to evaluate and change one's views.
- Persist in one's search for truth.
- Have the courage to uphold one's values, beliefs, and convictions.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

COPING WITH CHANGE: The student will be able to understand the inevitability of change. The student will recognize that all change implies transition. The student will have the skills to recognize, cope with, and manage transition.

Performance Standard: The student identifies a transition, formulates a clear plan of action, and implements a tentative solution. The student applies a positive problem-solving process regarding the transition.

Process:

1. Identify the transition.
2. Identify and choose ways of managing transition.
3. Evaluate the appropriateness of coping resources.
4. Specify goals.
5. Formulate and implement a clear plan of action.
6. If plan of action is not met, return to Step #4.
7. Identify what was learned from the transition process.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Explain the nature of transition.
- Identify personal values.
- Identify personal characteristics.
- Identify a variety of positive coping responses.
- Identify external and internal support systems.
- Assess the impact of transition on one's life.
- Use problem-solving strategies.
- Use self-reflection to integrate values with a plan of action.
- Reward self when you accomplish some or all of your plan.

Attitudes:

- Be aware of self-values and options.
- Increase sense of self-empowerment.
- Add creativity and humor to your plan of action.
- Recognize your attitude about change.
- Recognize the need to proactively manage change and transition.
- Recognize the need to accept the constancy of change.

CRITICAL LIFE SKILLS

FOR OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL SUCCESS

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The student will be able to use the principles of science and understand their effect on technology and change.

Performance Standard: Using knowledge of scientific inquiry: A problem is defined, information is collected, findings are checked, a valid conclusion is drawn, a solution is selected, and action is taken to implement the solution.

Process:

1. Define a problem.
2. Develop ideas.
3. Collect information.
4. Check findings.
5. Draw valid conclusions.
6. Decide on best solution.
7. Act to implement solution.

Knowledge and Skills Needed:

- Explain basic scientific principles.
- Identify issues brought about by evolving science and changing technology that affect individuals, groups, and the society as a whole.
- Utilize the power of tools like the computer to analyze, simulate, and solve problems.
- Visualize relationships of science and technology to economic development.
- Apply appropriate mathematical knowledge to the collection, analysis and use of information.
- Explain the principles of physical and/or life science that make up the foundation of technology (for specific associate degree).

Attitudes:

- Accept the influence that science and technology will have on the personal life of each individual.
- Recognize the transformation that science and technology continues to make in our world.
- Recognize the need for international cooperation to solve science and technology problems.
- Develop curiosity, openness to new ideas, and informed skepticism.

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